

COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
Rabbit Valley Working Group Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2002

Attendees:

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|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ken Currey | Nadja Brozina | Dave Dunsmoor | John Potter |
| Art Donoho | Arleta Carr | Dave Farny | Steve Renstrom |
| Bob Silbernagel | Jim Cooper | Chris Jouflas | Jane Ross |
| Gene Arnesen | Kathy Click | Pete Jouflas | Lovell Sasser |
| Sue Benjamin | Mike Click | Robin Lacy | Julie Stotler |
| | | Neal McKinstry | Charlie Sweet |

Greetings and Introductions

Chairman Dave Farny called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Twenty-three people were present at the beginning of the meeting. Jane Ross, Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Planning and Environmental Coordinator, introduced Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staffers Robin Lacy, Realty Specialist, from the Grand Junction field office, and Jim Cooper, Transportation Planner, on detail from BLM California to work on the CCNCA plan.

Working Group Discussions

Art Donoho noted that the original Rabbit Valley Management Plan addressed the need for land exchanges, but some key pieces of private property remain. He wondered if we needed to be more aggressive in pursuing that private property.

Robin reported that in 1989, the BLM started the Ruby Canyon land acquisition project using Land and Water Conservation Fund money. Since that time, the BLM has acquired 6,000 acres of private property within and adjacent to the National Conservation Area (NCA), including land in both Devils and Horsethief Canyons. Four private parcels remain, both along the river and upcountry, and total about 1,900 acres. Working Group member Chris Jouflas owns two of those parcels.

Robin went on to say that BLM has been negotiating with Chris for more than 10 years, and he originally wanted an exchange for some property near Wolcott. The values of the respective properties were too far apart for that exchange to work.

Dave indicated that Chris is now more interested in a trade for some comparable land in Utah, but Robin informed the group that when a trade involves land out-of-state, congressional action is required.

Chris arrived during the course of this discussion and stated that he is willing to negotiate an exchange for any property of equal value that will remove him from the NCA. Robin admitted that BLM had not appraised the Joufflas property since 1991, and with the regions' recent property value increases, potentially this land's value could have increased as well.

Jim suggested that BLM, Chris, and the Working Group proceed with two processes simultaneously—appraising the property to determine its value for outright purchase or exchange within the state, as well as working with congressional representatives to pursue a land exchange in the state of Utah. Chris reported that he has a meeting scheduled with Congressman Scott McInnis, and Dave said that he would like a meeting scheduled including himself, the two of them and BLM representatives.

The group discussed the upcoming field trip on Sunday, April 7, and what members want to see and talk about during that outing. Proposed new motorcycle trails, parking areas, and designated camping areas are included in the day's agenda.

The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for April 8, 5:45 p.m., at the Fruita Civic Center. This meeting was adjourned.